

## THE PAAM STORY

1.

It is 1972 – I am Roy Sano, the director of the Asian Center for Theology and Strategies...I was concerned about the lack of Asian American leadership in the church, in the conference and national boards. We talked about this at our annual meeting. Our members asked the board of directors to work to form an Asian American Caucus in the UCC similar to those in other denominations.

2.

Hi! I'm Julia Estrella – Mary Tomita and I wanted to do something about this kind of racism. So we talked to everyone! We got our local church (Sycamore Congregational Church) to back us...I still remember Hiro Hirano made the motion at our church council to send Mary and me to the General Synod.

3.

I'm Mary Tomita – in 1973, I brought this issue about the lack of Asian American leadership to the CJACCA and its board of directors voted some funds for me and Julia to attend the 9<sup>th</sup> General Synod in St. Louis to lay the groundwork for organizing an Asian American Caucus in the United Church of Christ.

4.

I'm Terry Kawata, staff member of the Office for Church Life and Leadership. That was before I became the Conference Minister of the Central Pacific and Hawaii Conferences. I helped in the planning for a

national conference on the concerns of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders held in 1974 in San Francisco...this gathering was funded by the Commission for Racial Justice.

5.

I am the PAAM (Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries) of the United Church of Christ. I was conceived at that 1974 gathering in San Francisco and took my first breath at the 10<sup>th</sup> General Synod in 1975 as a recognized Special Interest Group within the UCC!

6.

When I was 14, in 1989, the 17<sup>th</sup> General Synod adopted the pronouncement “A United Church of Christ Ministry with Pacific Islander and Asian Americans” which called for the establishment of an Implementation Committee to make requests about the ministries of PAAM churches.

7.

When I was 16, in 1991, the 18<sup>th</sup> General Synod passed a resolution designating the last Sunday of April as PAAM Sunday. On that day, ALL churches in the UCC are invited to observe PAAM Sunday by recognizing and celebrating the gifts and contributions of the Pacific Islander and Asian Americans in the life of the UCC.

8.

I am PAAM! I am proud of many accomplishments in my almost 36 years of life – I have initiated, sponsored, supported, and participated in

many activities in local church, regional, national, and ecumenical settings of the church – activities like

- workshops for local churches on evangelism and Christian education
- youth gatherings
- a conference on Evangelism from an Ethnic-Minority Perspective
- a conference on Asian American Theology
- a UCC Asian American Women's Leadership Workshop.

9.

I am PAAM! I continue to advocate for human rights in Asian countries. I continue to question the role of our church and nation in these countries and continue to seek to address institutional racism within church and society.

10.

I am PAAM! I continue to grow – we now number 16 ethnicities! We speak, worship and sing in more than 25 languages.

11.

I am PAAM! I have continued to work for greater Asian American and Pacific Islander representation in the national setting of the United Church of Christ and on conference boards and staff positions.

12.

I am PAAM! I am David Hirano, Executive Vice President of United Church Board for World Ministries.

13.

I am Guillermo Bergado, Minister for Pacific Islander and Asian American Church Development.

14.

I am Mineo Katagiri, Conference Minister.

15.

I am Ching-fen Hsiao, East Asian Desk for World Ministries.

16.

I am Kenneth Iha, Executive Associate to the President.

17.

I am Nozomi Ikuta, Executive Associate to the General Minister and President of UCC.

18.

I am Ferdinand Rico, Minister of Pacific Islander and Asian American Relations.

19.

I am Federico Ranches, Minister for Church Development

20.

I am Joe Malayang, Executive Minister of Local Church Ministries.

21.

I am Wally Kuroiwa, Minister & Team Leader, Justice & Witness Ministries.

22.

I am Joan Ishibashi, Associate Conference Minister.

23.

I am Iese Tu'uao, Associate Conference Minister.

24.

I am Charles Buck, Conference Minister

25.

I am Rodney Yee, National staff, Office of Church Life and Leadership.

26.

I am June Boutwell, Interim Conference Minister

27. +

I am \_\_\_\_\_(name), \_\_\_\_\_(position)

<<Needs to be updated to include more current PAAM folks serving in various settings>>